

Seeding Trials of Selected Native Plant Releases

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Seeding rate, season of seeding, and seed coatings are being studied to determine the optimum planting strategies for 12 native grasses in south Texas. The study location for this project is located on abandoned farmland recently dominated by the non-native buffelgrass. Results to date show no significant correlation between seeding rates and successful establishment. Plantings of one species (Arizona cottontop) using coated seed had greater seedling density than plantings of non-coated seed at 1, 3, and 6 months from seeding, however, by 1 year following planting, plantings of coated and un-coated seed had similar numbers of plants present. Plantings made in spring and summer have resulted in extreme infestations of buffelgrass by 1-2 years following seeding. Emergence of planted native grass species was significantly higher in the summer plantings than either fall or spring plantings.

Of the 12 species planted in these trials, Dilley Germplasm slender grama and Welder Germplasm shortspike windmillgrass have shown the best performance and appear to be the most competitive in areas dominated by buffelgrass.

These plantings will be monitored through 2009 to obtain long term data on the establishment and competitive ability of these native grasses when planted in landscapes dominated by buffelgrass.

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